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POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

BACKWATER

A CHILDISH TALE

Listen to my childish tale:
My heart was sad today;
My heart was so sad I could not find
Anything to say.

I walked out to the city's edge
Where the streets all disappear,
And I thought the fields were sad with me—
Songless fields and drear.

I sat down under a maple tree
That rose up lone and bare;
Its dying-colored leaves were strewn
About me everywhere.

I sat and pondered aimlessly
Under the silent tree,
I pondered sadly under the boughs
That I thought were sad with me.

Then in a flash I felt a cool
And steely serenity
Descending from those silent boughs—
They were not sad with me.

Edward Sapir

And I felt the steely calm of their strength
Slip in my heart like a breath,
And I was like a wakened man
That had drowsed away in death.

I saw that steel was the maple-tree,
It had never been sad with me;
I saw that the blue of the sky was steel
In its cool serenity.

We were all steel out there in the field,
We three beyond the town—
We three that were strong over the leaves
Dying in red and brown.

Now you have heard my childish tale:
My heart was sad today
And it lost its sadness under a tree.
That is all I wanted to say.

THE OLD TOWN

Oh, let me not enter the old town,
The straggling street!
Oh, I fear, I fear the going down
On stumbling feet!

Oh, let me not grope down the dim way
To the pitchy sea,